REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-4 and 6-17 are pending. Claims 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 have been amended. Claim 5 has been canceled. New claims 11-17 have been added. No new matter has been added.

Claims 2, 4, 7, and 9 were objected to for informalities. Claims 2 and 4 have been amended in response to the objection.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating claims 5-9 include allowable subject matters. Claims 1 and 3 have been amended to recite and incorporate certain features of claim 5.

Claims 1-4 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hidaka et al. Applicant traverses the rejection. Claim 1 has been amended to recite, "a discharging means having two discharging units for discharging the output terminal in a period of which the voltage level of the internal voltage is higher than a predetermined target voltage level, wherein one of the two discharging units includes a plurality of active loads connected between the output terminal and a ground voltage in series."

Hidaka uses three transistors Tr1, Tr2, and Tr3 for charging and discharging the bit lines (see Fig. 4). Hidaka does not teach a discharging means that has two discharging unit, wherein "one of the two discharging units includes a plurality of active loads connected between the output terminal and a ground voltage in series," as recited in claim 1. Claim 1 is allowable at least for this reason.

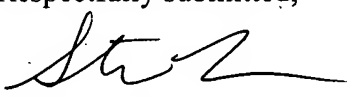
Claim 3, as amended, recites, "a first discharging means for discharging the output terminal when the voltage level of the internal voltage is higher than a predetermined target voltage level in response to the internal voltage, wherein the first discharging means includes a plurality of active loads connected between the output terminal and a ground voltage in series." Hidaka does not disclose the above recited features. Claim 3 is allowable at least for this reason.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,



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